

# The Shinobi Test: The Shikamaru Solution

**By: lord of the land of fire**

A ninja's career is brutal and based on violence. What if the tests used by Konoha to weed out candidates reflected this simple truth? - There is often more than one way to solve a problem. How would Shikamaru have handled the issues of Wave? Arc 3.

Status: complete

Published: 2012-08-10

Words: 3274

Rated: Fiction T - Language: English - Genre: Drama/Humor - Reviews: 57  
- Favs: 217 - Follows: 71

Original source: <https://www.fanfiction.net/s/8412619/1/The-Shinobi-Test-The-Shikamaru-Solution>

Exported with the assistance of [FicHub.net](https://FicHub.net)

# The Shinobi Test: The Shikamaru Solution

[Introduction](#)

[The Shinobi Test: The Shikamaru Solution](#)

# The Shinobi Test: The Shikamaru Solution

**Author's Notes:** I recently wrote a five chapter story called **The Shinobi Test** . As I often do I write it because I had an idea that interested me. Since writing fanfiction is my hobby I tend to write whatever interests me at a given time. Now as anyone who follows me probably knows that also means I have longer stories that remain incomplete that I may or may not eventually finish. The best known of my unfinished work being **That Look** .

I know how much readers hate stories being left incomplete. I am a reader of fanfiction too after all. However, as I said before this being my hobby I choose to update what interests me not what most people would choose for me to work on. Also I am spending a lot of my free time working on original material. Any of you who would like to read my original work can visit my website through a link on my fanfiction homepage.

Since I didn't want to begin another long story that would never be completed I deliberately made **The Shinobi Test** a short one. I want to continue writing in the somewhat harsher and more realistic setting and I noted it got a very strong response for a five chapter story. I want to continue but I don't want to end up with one more incomplete story that will aggravate people.

Here is the solution I have come up with. I am going to write 'Arcs' set in this world. These will be short, self-contained stories set in the same world. Expect them to be between three and six chapters with a maximum of ten.

This is the third arc and will just be one chapter.

---

"So Asuma," the Hokage asked. "Do you feel Team Ten is ready for a mission outside the village?"

Sarutobi Asuma nodded and answered. "I do Hokage-sama." His body language and words notably stiffer than usual. You would never guess the two men were father and son.

Shikamaru didn't know that the problem between them was but really wished his sensei would patch things up. Life would be so much easier if his teacher was on good terms with the ruler of the village.

The Hokage did not seem put off by his son's response. "That is good to hear. It just so happens I have the perfect mission." He turned to Iruka. "Please bring in the client from Wave."

"Hai Hokage-sama." Iruka got up and hurried to obey.

"Wave?" Ino chirped excitedly. "Does this mean we get to go to a foreign country?"

"Yes it does." The Hokage answered.

As Ino began to jump about excitedly Shikamaru just barely stopped himself from groaning out loud. Ino was hard enough to deal with in small doses. The thought of spending days or weeks on the road with her though made him want to run and hide.

By comparison his best friend Chouji was blissfully unaware of the shrill and terrible horrors that were to come. He was just happily munching potato chips without a care in the world.

Shikamaru was glad to see his friend back to his usual self. When they had gone to the Land of Tea for the Shinobi Test it had been hardest on him. The three of them had grown in ninja clans and the realities of ninja life had always been made plain to them. Unlike many of their classmates at the Academy they had understood what sorts of things shinobi did.

When Asuma had explained to them about the test it had come as a shock but he and Ino had accepted it. She had wound up using a henge to get some guy to go up on a roof top to make out with her.

She had then possessed his body just long enough to make him jump off. He had used his shadow manipulation jutsu to force someone to eat poisoned berries. Chouji had been forced to murder someone with a kunai. He had been unusually quiet and solemn for a couple weeks, but had then slowly returned to normal.

Now he, Chouji, and Ino were about to go on their first real mission. So long as they had Asuma-sensei to watch out for them he was sure nothing too bad could happen. His only wish was that the mission not be too troublesome.

A door to the meeting room slid open.

There was a grumpy looking old man with an uncombed beard and wrinkled clothes. He had a bottle of sake in one hand and smelled of alcohol. Distrusting eyes looked them over.

"Are you joking? I asked for ninja and you expect me to put my life in the hands of these brats? They look useless, especially the fat one."

*Oh crap!* Shikamaru thought as both he and Ino knew what was about to happen.

"WHO ARE YOU CALLING FAT?!" Chouji yelled at the top of his lungs. He charged at the rude old drunk.

Chouji was one of the nicest guys you would ever want to meet. But you did **not** call him fat.

Fortunately Shikamaru ran through some hand signs and his shadow merged with Chouji's, bringing him to an immediate halt.

"Sorry Chouji, but I'm pretty sure killing the client is against some rule."

The client was obviously unhappy and did not hesitate to let the Hokage know it. "I am not going to trust my life to children. I want real ninja."

The Hokage sighed. "Tazuna-san, while the squad is made up of rookies I assure you their sensei is an elite ninja and more than capable of protecting you from bandits on your way home to Wave."

"That's not good enough."

The Hokage slowly, deliberately took a long puff from his pipe. "The fee you are paying is the absolute minimum for any mission involving travel to a foreign country. If you want to insist on a more experienced escort one can be provided. However the cost will be fifty percent more."

There was a look of pain on the client's face. "On second thought it's fine." He glared at the members of Team Ten. "I am Tazuna, a bridge builder of great renown! I expect you brats to be honored to protect me."

"Honored," Shikamaru muttered as he continued to hold Chouji in place. "Yeah... that's what we're feeling."

---

The next day dawned bright and clear.

The client showed up looking just as unhappy as he had the day before with another bottle of sake in hand. From the moment they set out he was grumbling about the quality of their work. Ino meanwhile was describing her plans for her eventual wedding to Sasuke-kun. She had decided since Sakura was no longer her rival she could be a bridesmaid.

Asuma was smoking like a chimney and Chouji was inhaling potato ships. In his head Shikamaru was playing Shougi against himself.

So far he'd won three out of five matches.

They were less than six miles from Konoha when Shikamaru spotted a puddle in the middle of the road.

"Sensei," he spoke in a regular voice. "Did you notice the puddle back there?"

"Yes I did." Asuma replied, also in a conversational volume.

"Huh?" Ino asked. She'd been trying to decide between white or red table cloths. "What are you talking about?"

Shikamaru sighed. "There hasn't been any rain for at least a week. There shouldn't be any puddles. That almost certainly means it's a genjutsu and we're about to be attacked."

"What?" Tazuna said in panic.

Sure enough, two enemy ninja rose out of the puddle to attack them. Sadly for them they were Chunin while Asuma was an elite Jonin. In very short order the enemy ninja were beaten unconscious and tied to a tree.

After that Asuma stood facing Tazuna. "Tazuna-san, we need to have a talk."

"What do you mean?" He asked nervously.

"It's very unusual for ninja to deliberately attack other ninja, especially this close to a shinobi village. On the other hand it's hard to imagine why anyone would go to the trouble to pay for an assassination on you. Did you really hire us to protect you from bandits? Or were you expecting to be attacked by ninja?"

"Don't be ridiculous! How could I possibly expect something like this?"

For ninja who were trained to spot deception Tazuna's body language and uneven tone screamed that he was lying.

"Tazuna-san," Asuma said patiently. "I need to know the truth. Now we can do this the easy way or... well actually why don't we just do

this the easy way." He turned to his blonde twelve year old student.  
"Ino, go inside him."

"Right sensei."

"What?" Tazuna barked. "What kind of sick people are you?!"

"I'll explain later." Asuma promised.

Ino performed her mind switching jutsu. She occupied Tazuna's body as Shikamaru caught hers.

"Eww! This is so gross!" Tazuna whined. "I reek of sweat and booze, I'm overweight, and I have hair all over me! And how the hell do you boys stand having this thing between your legs?"

Shikamaru shrugged. "Like a lot of other things you just learn to ignore it."

"Ino..." Asuma said.

"Right sensei; let me go through his memories."

In short order Ino had discovered all his secrets. Just to be thorough she also used her jutsu on the two ninja who had attacked them. Once she was done and restored to her own body Shikamaru summarized what they had learned.

"So Tazuna is trying to build a bridge in order to stop a billionaire shipping magnate named Gato from terrorizing and economically strangling his home country. Meanwhile this Gato had hired an S-rank missing nin by the name of Zabuza and his apprentice to assassinate Tazuna as soon as he sets foot back in Wave. Even if we somehow manage to defeat them said Gato is so rich and has so much political backing that he can bring in more missing nins and an army of hired thugs if he wants to. I think that about covers the high lights."

Asuma nodded. "The question is what to do now."



"Sensei," Ino spoke. "I say we help him. His people are in real trouble and need this bridge. Besides if we don't he really is going to be killed. He has a daughter and a grandson who rely on him."

"Ino are you insane?" Shikamaru asked. "The client lied to us and you want us to take him to a place where an S-rank missing nin is waiting for us? Not to mention a guy who may as well be a criminal overlord with unlimited resources."

"I'm sure Asuma sensei could handle everything." Ino retorted.

"Even if that's the case did you ever hear the phrase, 'collateral damage?' or were you too busy batting your eyes at Sasuke the day we covered it in class?"

Ino's face reddened. "So what's your solution then? We just abandon him and let him be killed?"

"Fine," Shikamaru said. "I'll come up with a solution."

He promptly crouched down and closed his eyes. He brought his hands together in an 'O' and began to think on the problem.

After five minutes he stood up. "Okay I've got the answer."

"What is it?" Asuma asked. In the short time he had known Shika he had come to have faith in the hidden talents of this lazy genius.

"Well first we need to bring Tazuna back to the village and talk to the Hokage."

"So we're abandoning him?" Ino cried.

"No." Shikamaru told her. "Now come on and I'll explain."

---

It was about a month later when Gato arrived in Konoha for a meeting with the Hokage Sarutobi Hiruzen. Gato had come in answer to a 'request' by the Hokage. Gato was a man of immense

wealth and power, a billionaire hundreds of times over. Corporate presidents and feudal lords answered to him, he was not in the habit of *taking* orders, even polite ones.

The ninja villages were unique though. They existed outside the usual norms of society. They functioned as businesses and sought profit and wealth like any other business. However they also killed people openly and without fear of any sort of retribution. Gato had people killed as well; the difference was his murders had to be done in secret, or under pretense that he was acting as the law. (This was how he'd been able to perform his public executions in Wave.) No matter how vast his power was it was not absolute. There were many other rich and powerful men who he could attack either openly or in secret. He was still bound by certain limits.

The only people the shinobi villages truly feared were the other villages. They literally could have just about *anyone* killed if the village leader wished it. Even Daimyos were careful to tread lightly where they were concerned.

So when he had received the ever so politely worded summons Gato had answered it. He sat down in the private office of the Hokage and they spoke as tea was served.

"Why did you ask me to come here?"

"I thought it best that we speak so as to avoid any unnecessary misunderstandings." The Hokage said as he sipped his tea. "Tazuna will be returning home soon to complete his bridge there."

"That old drunk? Why would I even care about that?"

"Did you know how the bridge was financed?" The Hokage asked.

Gato was taken aback by the unexpected question. "He raised money from the locals. He wasn't able to get a bank loan or any sort of corporate financing." *I made damn sure of that.*

Sarutobi nodded. "Very true. Thousands of Wave citizens contributed whatever they could."

"Yes I know that," Gato said sounding a bit impatient. "They managed to scrape up just barely enough to buy the equipment and materials they needed. There wasn't enough to pay for the labor." *Or a decent ninja escort.* "Which is why construction halted, what does this have to do with anything?"

"Well, you see Tazuna did not want people to think he might pocket their contributions. So rather than simply take the money and spend it he actually formed a corporation with it, essentially making every person who contributed a stockholder and partial owner of the bridge."

"Corporations are very easy to form." Gato said irritably. He already knew all this. "All it usually takes is filing some forms and maybe paying a few thousand ryo for fees. It doesn't really mean much though without capital investment. If your corporation doesn't have any funds you're just a small business under a fancy title with a few tax incentives."

The Hokage nodded. "Which is why you might be interested to know that the, 'Great Wave Bridge Corporation LTD' had just gained a new investor. The village of Konoha now owns forty nine percent of the company."

Gato sat up startled. "You can't do that!"

"I most certainly can and have. The village holds many properties all over the Elemental Lands. For instance did you know we own sixty percent of Fotuda Toys? Every time a parent buys a Haruka-Hime doll for their little girl the village is making sixty percent of every ryo spent. You could even say the village of Konoha is in the business of making little girls into unicorn princesses."

"That's nice... I suppose." Gato had no children or grandchildren so had no idea what to make of that.

"The point is the village regularly invests where it can make a profit. We will provide capital for the purchase of whatever is needed to complete the bridge as well as a full ANBU squad who will be **permanently** stationed there to provide security for the bridge as well as to all the stockholders in the company. In exchange Tazuna has agreed that a small toll will be placed on all traffic on the bridge. Konoha will receive all tolls for the first five years of operation, and forty nine percent afterwards."

Gato was stunned. He was sure Zabuza would refuse to take on an entire squad of Konoha's most elite ninja. Even if he managed to or if Gato found some other way to get rid of Tazuna it no longer mattered. If Konoha was now a partial owner they would never walk away from it. Even if Tazuna were to disappear the Hokage would see the bridge was completed.

There was no longer any reason to kill Tazuna, he no longer mattered.

"What if I offered you ten times what you have paid for your share of the company?"

The Hokage shook his head. "I am not interested. What is more, my ANBU will be active in protecting all the company shareholders; thousands of the ordinary people. Should my ninja see them being violently attacked or threatened or mistreated in any way they will intervene. I have no authority over the actions that have taken place there in the past, but I will not tolerate similar actions in the future. I hope my meaning is clear?"

Gato silently nodded. What the Hokage had just told him in his roundabout way was that he was no longer free to do as he pleased in Wave. Using a nuke nin to try and ambush an escort squad was one thing. Deliberately opposing the Leaf village quite another.

"What about all my investments in Wave? I've spent millions setting up a monopoly on water transport there."

"If those investments were legal I will certainly not interfere with them. You have every right to conduct your shipping business in Wave. Though I suspect you will need to drastically lower your prices if you are going to compete with land transport going across the bridge, even with the tolls charges added."

"I see." Gato sighed. The good times were over. He would still make a profit but it would not compare to what he had. It was a shame but there was no choice. There was no profit in trying to outmuscle the leaf village. He set down his cup and saucer and got up. "I thank you for the tea and for the informative chat. I am sure we will have no issues in the future."

"I am glad to hear that."

The Hokage sighed as the man left. This was not justice. Gato would not be made to answer for all of his crimes. Konoha though was not the world's police force and at least this way Wave country would get to recover and once more prosper.

---

### **A Couple Months Later...**

"Hey did you hear?" Sasuke asked. "Shikamaru got a bridge named after him."

"Huh? What are you talking about?" Naruto responded.

"Well apparently there's this bridge in Wave country that Shikamaru somehow helped to get built. They're calling it, 'The Great Shikamaru Bridge.'"

"How did someone as lazy and dumb as Shikamaru get a bridge named after him?"

"Who knows?"

Naruto felt as if he had somehow been cheated. "That is so unfair! If anyone should get a bridge named after him it ought to be me!"

Sasuke couldn't help but laugh. "Sure, 'The Great Naruto Bridge.' Like that would ever happen!"